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BRIEF NOTES

Representation of tones in Oriental languages

A Note on the Representation of Tones in Oriental Languages appeared on pp. 453ff. of the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* for October 1920, and, at the risk of appearing egotistical, I venture to draw the attention of the Members of the American Oriental Society to the proposals contained therein. I believe that all Orientalists who have anything to do with the Far East have long felt the need of one universal system of representing tones for all languages, instead of the varying systems and confusion that exist at the present day. I in no way assume that the system proposed by me is the best possible, and, if a better and more convenient is suggested, I shall be the first to welcome it. Anyhow, perhaps it may be taken by American Orientalists as a starting point for the consideration of the subject.

The Note is the outcome of a Committee held in London, of which the principal members were Mr. Lionel Giles, of the British Museum, Sir Denison Ross, Director of the School of Oriental Studies, and Dr. Thomas, the Librarian of the India Office, and was drawn up at their request, but on my own responsibility. It was laid before the Joint Meeting of Oriental Societies held in Paris in July 1920, at which were present representatives of the American Oriental Society, the Royal Asiatic Society, and the Société Asiatique. The Proceedings of that Meeting were published in the *Journal Asiatique* for July-September 1920, and on page 192 there will be found, under the heading "Rapport de la Commission des Transcriptions," the following recommendation:

Le Comité donne son approbation cordiale au système de représentation des tons exposé par Sir George Grierson dans un article qui a été communiqué en manuscrit à la Commission (et publié ultérieurement dans le *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* octobre 1920).¹

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¹ *Editorial Note.*—The Editors commend to the thoughtful consideration of the members of the Society and readers of the JOURNAL Sir George Grierson's illuminating study of a system for representing tones. We hope in the near future to be able to publish an article by a well-known American authority illustrating the use of the proposed system.